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ABSTRACT

The rapid changes occurring in U.S. society and the rest of the world require dramatic improvements in educating U.S. citizenry. New York's public school system also needs reorganizing according to a new compact for learning. This report explains this compact and its fundamental principles: (1) recognizing that all children can learn; (2) focusing on results; (3) aiming for mastery; (4) providing the means; (5) providing authority with accountability; and (6) rewarding success and remedying failure. The compact's goals, strategic objectives, and specific roles of the state, the student, the parent, the teacher, the school support team, the principal, the school, the school district, the community, the superintendent of schools, the board of education, the region, higher and continuing education, libraries and other cultural institutions; and business, industry, and labor are outlined in separate sections. The compact's relationship to equity concerns, accountability, strategic planning, and Regents' goals and Bill of Rights for Children are also delineated. (MLH)

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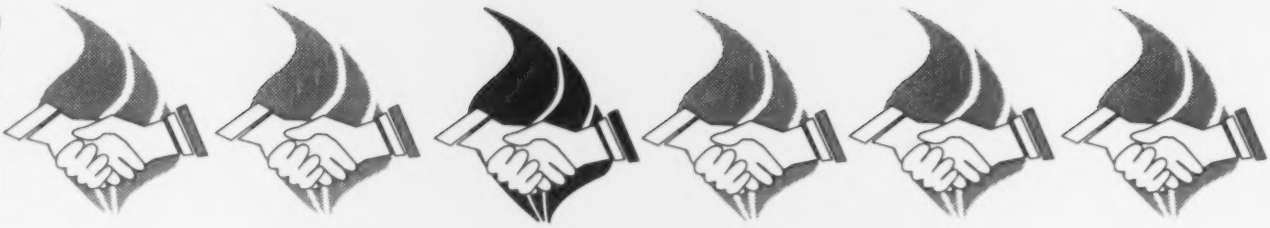

A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING PUBLIC ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RESULTS IN THE 1990s

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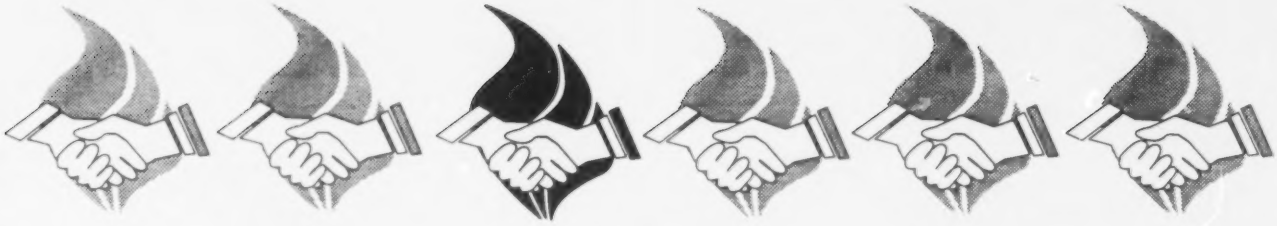

A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING PUBLIC ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RESULTS IN THE 1990s

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
March 1991

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A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING
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A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING:
Improving Public Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Education Results in the 1990s

A. A New Century, a New Era

New York State can be proud of what its schools have achieved. Over the course of the last century, our public schools have prepared millions of children from all kinds of backgrounds to lead decent and productive lives. In our rural areas, in our great and small cities, and in our suburbs dedicated teachers, school administrators, and boards of education have guided generation after generation of young people, many of them from foreign shores, toward effective participation in family, civic, and economic life. Much of the cohesion and stability in our society derives from the work of the public school. We have truly created, as our State Constitution puts it, "a system of free common schools wherein all the children of the State may be educated."

And there have been other gains. At the beginning of the century, only one of four young people finished high school; today, the numbers are three of four. A hundred years ago, children with handicapping conditions were misunderstood and neglected; today, their educational rights are secured. Even in recent years, despite prevalent criticism, the schools have been improving. Scores on tests of basic skills have risen; more students are enrolled in challenging academic courses than were so 20 years ago; more are studying a second language. Today, as in the past, many of New York's schools and students are among the finest in the nation.

But the world spins on, and times change. As this century rushes to an end, the world that most of us knew in our growing up, and even in our adult years, is vanishing. Everything about us is changing: the makeup of our population; family groups and patterns of family living; the nature of our economy and the demands of the workplace; the dramatic realignments of nations and cultures on the world scene, and our increasingly threatened economic preeminence; the capacity of technology to transform our lives; our knowledge of the universe and of ourselves. Our children will live in a time very different from our own, and although we can see the future only through a glass, darkly, all signs suggest that if our young people are to prosper in a world of continuing change, the depth and breadth of trained intelligence among our citizenry must vastly exceed anything we have thus far achieved.

Unhappily, it is not clear that we shall achieve it. For all of our schools' successes, our failures are staggering. One of four students does *not* graduate from high school — and the economy no longer provides for such unskilled labor. An unhappy, alienated underclass has been created, living bleak lives and posing a threat to the social and economic well-being of the society. Many of those who do graduate from high school lack the skill and knowledge to function effectively in a sophisticated society. Even many of our "best" students, those who graduate with honors and go on to attend prestigious colleges, know less math and science and history and foreign language than their agemates in other industrialized nations. And for these reasons, young people fail to develop their capacities, the quality of our civic life is impaired, jobs go unfilled, businesses move, industries fail to develop, and our standard of living is poised for decline.

The problem is not that the legions of dedicated people who work in our schools are limited or uncaring, nor that they are unwilling to exert themselves to serve our children. On the contrary: the schools are filled with intelligent, conscientious, even idealistic people eager to be effective. The problem is that the system they are caught in —

schools as we still organize and run them, prevailing notions of curriculum and instructional method, the existing allocations of responsibility and authority — has become obsolete. For all the other changes around us, the American school today is more as it was in 1900 or 1950 than it is different. And what worked in the 1900s will not work in the 2000s. Either we will make now the fundamental changes needed in the ways we raise and educate our children, or we can begin the slide into a darker and less prosperous time. Tinkering with the status quo is not enough. We must change the system so that we may achieve the results we need. And we are running out of time: either we will make the changes that a new century and a new era require, or we will sink into mediocrity.

B. Needed: A New Compact for Learning

The rapid changes occurring in our society and on the world scene require not gradual but dramatic improvements in educating our citizenry. We are called upon to do something this State and nation have never done: simultaneously to narrow the gap between the educational haves and have-nots, and to raise the entire enterprise to a new plane of excellence. Throughout our society, there is growing consensus for fundamental changes in the ways we organize and operate elementary and secondary schools — indeed, in the ways we raise and educate our children. What we need for the 1990s is a new approach, one which continues and extends the effective things we are already doing, integrating them with new efforts in a single, comprehensive plan.

In New York State's decentralized public school system many people share the responsibility for achieving desired results. The Legislature, the Governor, the Board of Regents, the Commissioner of Education and the State Education Department staff, local boards of education, teachers, librarians, administrators and supervisors, support personnel, parents, and students themselves all have important roles to play — along with representatives of higher education, cultural institutions, and community members. No one part of the system can achieve satisfactory results without the cooperation of other parts of the whole.

In some places the system does work well, as noted above. But in general, too many teachers and supervisors feel that the system is "beyond them," that they lack the authority to do their own job well and that too many decisions are made by people remote from the action. Parents often feel excluded, unable to influence the education of their own children. Too often things seem to be running on automatic pilot, with much activity but unclear purpose, and with occasional successes occurring "despite the system" rather than because of it.

We must reconceive the system itself. To begin with, we must understand that schools alone cannot bring about the improved education results we need. Schools are central to the effort, of course, and school personnel should be held accountable for their work. But increasingly we realize that if children are to learn and develop well, parents must take more responsibility for the education of their children (and must be given the opportunity to do so); higher education, community educational and cultural institutions, the social-services and health communities, and the business community must play an active part; and students themselves must in some cases accept more responsibility for their own educational progress. Increasingly we appreciate the wisdom of the ancient African proverb: "It takes the whole village to raise a child."

Then, in order to change the system so that it produces the desired results, the energies of all participants must be harnessed in cooperative endeavor behind shared purposes. Given reasonable consensus on goals and objectives and on the means by which they will be pursued, all parties must agree to do their parts and to work together toward common goals. We need a new commitment by all participants to doing whatever it takes and making whatever changes are necessary to bring about the desired educational results; and we need to provide the freedom and support which make such effort possible. We need a New Compact for Learning — one which focuses on results, which promotes local initiative, and which empowers people at all levels of the system.

C. Goals for Elementary and Secondary Education

In New York State there is general consensus on the goals for elementary and secondary education. In 1984, after extensive consultation with people throughout the State, the Board of Regents published 10 broad goals which continue to define our purposes as we approach the next century. (They are listed in Section Y.)

These Goals provide a broad and spacious view of life and learning. They call for individuals who have developed their intellectual, emotional, and physical powers to the fullest; who are aware of their situation in society, in the environment, and in history, and are committed to deepening that awareness; who understand how knowledge is developed, and are increasingly familiar with the major domains of human learning; who have acquired the skills, knowledge, and values needed for effective participation

in society; who appreciate the arts through which we express and elevate the human condition; and who are prepared for life in a diverse society and a multicultural world. This vision of what education must do and be should guide us as we plot our course.

Additional guidance is provided by The Regents Bill of Rights for Children, adopted in 1989. This statement sets forth principles and goals which should be followed in raising and educating our children. (The Bill of Rights appears as Section Z.)

D. Strategic Objectives

The Regents Goals are perennial. They define our purposes on a long-term, ongoing basis. In the shorter term, we need a set of strategic objectives to focus our efforts and to enable us to measure our progress.

Any such set of objectives, if it is to provide focus, is necessarily limited in scope. We cannot simultaneously list all that we hope to do, and select those aims toward which we will direct foremost effort. In the understanding, then, that we shall continue to pursue all of the Regents Goals, here is a list of strategic objectives which we New Yorkers should commit ourselves to accomplishing. Significant progress toward achieving these objectives should be made by the year 2000.

1. All children will come to school ready to learn.
2. All children will read, write, compute, and use the thinking skills they need to continue learning by the time they are in the fourth grade or its equivalent.
3. At least 90 percent of all young people will earn a high school diploma by age 21.
4. All high school graduates will be prepared for college, work, or both.
5. All high school graduates will demonstrate proficiency in English and another language; in mathematics, the natural sciences, and technology; in history and other social sciences; and in the arts and other humanities. (Standards of proficiency will be developed by appropriate parties for approval by the Regents.)
6. All students will acquire the skills and knowledge needed for employment and effective citizenship.
7. All students will demonstrate commitment to the core values of our democratic society and knowledge of the history and culture of the major groups which comprise American society and the world.
8. Students of both genders and all socioeconomic and racial/ethnic backgrounds will show similar achievement on State assessment measures.

E. The Principles of the Compact

The New Compact for Learning and the system to which it gives rise are based on certain fundamental principles.

1. ***All children can learn.***

   All children are capable of learning and contributing to society. No child should be permitted to fail.

2. ***Focus on results.***

   Our mission is not to keep school — it is to see that children learn. The energies of all participants should be focused on achieving the desired outcomes. Accountability does not end with following established rules and procedures; its essence is found in results.

3. ***Aim for mastery.***

   Minimum competence, while necessary, is not enough. Successful participation in our society demands much more. All children are entitled to a curriculum, to instructional methods, and to adult expectations which challenge them to perform at their best, and help them to become truly proficient in knowledge and skill.

4. ***Provide the means.***

   Every child in New York State is entitled to the resources necessary to provide the sound, basic education which the State Constitution requires. The requirement is not equality of input, but equity of outcome.

5. ***Provide authority with accountability.***

   Each participant in the educational system should have the authority needed to discharge effectively his or her responsibility, and each participant should be held accountable for achieving the desired results. This principle applies to all participants in the educational process — students, parents, teachers, counselors, librarians, administrators, Board of Education members, others.

6. ***Reward success and remedy failure.***

   Achievement of desired results by individuals and groups should be rewarded. The existing system tends to reward those who make no waves. The times demand a system which rewards those who take risks to produce results.

   Occasional failure in a large and diverse system is probably unavoidable. However, failure should not be permitted to persist. When it occurs, with either individuals or groups, help should be provided and the situation changed.

F. The State

In recent years the Regents have taken many actions to improve education results at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The Regents Action Plan, the driving engine of school improvement efforts in the 1980s, raised standards, introduced new methods of accountability, channeled new resources, and resulted in improved scores on tests of basic skills. The important gains made by the Action Plan must not be lost. More recently, the Excellence and Accountability Program has extended the reach for excellence beyond minimum competency, provided for participation of teachers and parents in making decisions about educational matters, and required all school districts to develop long-range educational plans. The Middle-Level Challenge Program offers to set aside inhibiting regulations where school districts develop a convincing plan for educating pupils more effectively. These new programs have begun to teach us much about the additional work which must be done if we are to achieve our twin goals of equity and excellence for all our pupils.

Increasingly, however, we discern the need to do more. The State's role in the New Compact must extend beyond the regulatory. Obviously, the State must continue to monitor public education to assure that monies are spent lawfully, that regulations are obeyed, that students', parents', teachers', and other participants' rights are secured. But regulation and monitoring alone will not bring about the desired improvements in the system. The New Compact for Learning will use the power and influence of the State assertively — and it will also engage in collaborative endeavor the energies of teachers, administrators, school board members, parents, and the entire education community, including higher education and community-based educational resources such as libraries, museums, and educational television. We have learned that we cannot achieve the results we desire through top-down regulations alone. We know that we cannot wait for the necessary changes to well up from below. What we need is "top-down support for bottom-up reform."

Throughout the decade of the 1990s, the Board of Regents and the State Education Department will perform the following chief functions in improving elementary, middle, and secondary education:

1. Set statewide goals.

- ❑ The Regents reendorse their 1984 "Statement of Regents Goals for Elementary- and Secondary-School Students," and they will consider whether any modifications are essential for the new decade.
- ❑ The Regents will state more specifically the skills, knowledge, and values students should acquire as a result of elementary and secondary education. (It is no longer enough, for example, to require "two years of mathematics" at the high school level — the desired results of such study will be made explicit.) In specifying the skills, knowledge, and values which students should acquire, the Regents will consult broadly with members of the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education community; with representatives of libraries and other community educational institutions; with business, industry, organized labor, State and local government; with parents and parent organizations; and with the public.
- ❑ Skills, knowledge, and values will be so specified as to emphasize the development of higher cognitive processes in all students. Quantity will be balanced with quality, breadth with depth. While rudimentary skills and factual knowledge remain important, the larger goal is to nurture the quality of students' mental activity — the capacity to raise questions, generate hypotheses, solve complex problems, integrate learning, communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- ❑ The required skills and knowledge will be arranged on a continuum for each subject, from the most rudimentary attainment to mastery. Performance standards will be established both for minimum competency and for proficiency in each subject, at levels corresponding to traditional grades 4, 8, and 12. These standards will serve as benchmarks of progress, not as "promotional gates." All pupils will be encouraged to excel.
- ❑ The goals and desired learning outcomes will apply to all pupils. All pupils are entitled to programs which make it possible for them to learn the skills and acquire the knowledge needed to function effectively in society. An instructional program derived from the goals and desired learning outcomes is not just a requirement, but an entitlement.
- ❑ Statements of desired outcomes will be specific enough to ensure that all students acquire a solid core of skill and knowledge in the use of the English language; in mathematics and the natural sciences; in the social sciences; and in the humanities and the arts. However, they will be broad enough to permit interdisciplinary studies and local variation in specific content.
- ❑ To this end, the Regents will set statewide goals and desired learning outcomes clearly and specifically, but they will not impose on schools and school districts a requirement to use State syllabi (curriculum outlines) or curricula (detailed plans of study). The object is to achieve statewide clarity and consistency of purpose

and results while promoting operating flexibility at the local level. (The Regents will continue to publish syllabi and other instructional materials as optional resources.)

- ❑ Specifying statewide goals and desired learning outcomes will:
  - promote clarity and consistency of educational purposes;
  - guide the development of textbooks, software, and other educational materials;
  - assist school personnel in teaching the many New York State pupils who change residence during and between school years.

2. ***Promote local initiative.***

- ❑ The Regents will promote the exercise of responsible initiative by school districts, schools, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students, in order to make changes in school and school-system organization and practice that will help pupils achieve better results. Such exercise of initiative should help pupils attain statewide goals in ways most suitable to local circumstances.
- ❑ To promote the exercise of such initiative, the Regents will work to relax or remove rules and regulations which inhibit practitioners in their efforts to reach State goals more effectively and efficiently. Some regulations should be removed across the board; in other cases removal will be made contingent upon receipt of an approvable plan. Rules and regulations concerning pupil safety and civil rights will not be changed.
- ❑ The Regents will seek the changes necessary in law and/or regulation to permit the consolidated use of monies from separate funding streams, thus providing greater flexibility in educational programming. The goal is one education plan and one set of application forms per school, not multiple plans and forms as at present.
- ❑ The Regents will promote the participation of teachers and parents in making decisions about educational matters in all schools. A variety of means for such participation will be encouraged.
- ❑ The Regents will seek ways to increase the amount of time available for participation in staff development, planning, and decision making, by relaxing the regulations on conference days and/or seeking funds for an extension of the work year.
- ❑ The Regents embrace parental choice of schools within and among public school districts. Such choice can promote accountability, and allow parents to influence the development of new models of educational practice. The Regents should remove any regulations which impede choice and should seek legislation providing incentives for well-conceived choice systems. The exercise of choice must not be allowed to promote socioeconomic and racial segregation.

3. ***Provide resources, incentives, and assistance.***

- ❑ The Regents will specify and seek to provide the resources needed to allow all pupils to achieve State goals and desired learning outcomes. The standard is not equality of input, but equity of outcome.
- ❑ The Regents will promote equity for all pupils throughout the State. To this end, they will seek additional funds to assist poor schools and school districts in achieving statewide goals and desired learning outcomes, and will lobby for funding those programs most likely to improve learning outcomes for pupils at risk of school failure.
- ❑ The Regents will seek to provide incentives and assistance to schools and school districts which exercise initiative to attain statewide goals and desired learning outcomes by more effective (and cost-effective) means.
- ❑ Incentives can take the form of increased funding, relaxed regulation, opportunities for professional development, and public recognition. The Regents will seek to provide all of these.
- ❑ Assistance can take the form of course syllabi, instructional materials, staff development, on-site and off-site consultation, and public-awareness efforts. The Regents will endeavor to provide all of these.
- ❑ More specifically, the Regents will work collaboratively with school districts, teacher centers, institutions of teacher education, parent groups, and education organizations to provide teachers, other members of the school staff, and parents with the training needed for effective pursuit of statewide goals and desired learning outcomes and for effective participation in planning and decision making. The aim will be a thoroughly integrated system of goals, desired learning outcomes, course syllabi, curriculum materials, teacher education, staff development, and programs of assessment.
- ❑ The Regents will promote the enactment of legislation to designate public-school teaching and public-school administration and supervision as licensed professions in New York State.
- ❑ The Regents will support the development of programs which assist parents in raising and educating their children and which help school districts respond to the diverse needs of the families they serve.
- ❑ The Regents will seek to create government/ business partnerships to develop the computer courseware and other instructional material needed to pursue statewide educational goals and outcomes. Local school districts and the State itself lack the resources to develop this instructional infrastructure. The Regents Long-Range Plan for Technology in Elementary and Secondary Education provides a structure for this effort.

- ❑ The Regents will work to provide incentives for partnerships between the schools and community educational resources such as libraries, museums, and educational television.
- ❑ The Regents will continue to develop a program of school registration for all public schools in the State, in order to monitor quality and to assist school personnel in developing long-range education plans.
- ❑ The Regents will create and train a corps of teachers and supervisors to conduct school and school district School Improvement Reviews. The organization and operation of this corps will be modeled on elements of the Excellence and Accountability Program, leading accrediting associations, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate in England. The corps will consist of field teachers and supervisors serving on a part-time or temporary basis, coordinated by a small cadre of full-time State Education Department employees.
- ❑ The Regents will conduct and collect research on effective (and cost-effective) educational programs and practices, and disseminate the findings to policymakers and practitioners.
- ❑ The Regents will lead with respect to appropriate school district reorganization, including the promotion, where desirable, of school mergers, pooling of programs, and shared long-distance academic programs.
- ❑ The Regents will also work collaboratively to provide the staff development needed for those who govern and manage the education system, in order to assist them in their efforts to bring about the changes needed for better results.
- ❑ The Regents will conduct a public-awareness program to help the public understand the urgent need for educational change, the ways in which the New Compact for Learning is designed to address this need, the nature of statewide goals and desired outcomes, and the strategies in effect to achieve them.
- ❑ The Regents will redirect existing funds and seek additional funds to carry out these State operations.

4. Assess results.

- ❑ The Regents will assess the results of efforts made by school districts, schools, and pupils to attain statewide goals and desired learning outcomes. An effective program of assessment can help to guide activity as well as provide information for accountability.
- ❑ Accountability applies both to individuals and to the system in which they act. Individuals will be given the resources, freedom, and support they need to succeed; they will then be held accountable for the results of their efforts. At the same time, continuing assessment will be made of the extent to which the design and operation of the education system itself contributes to educational progress.
- ❑ The Regents will set standards and provide technical assistance for local programs of educational assessment.
- ❑ The Regents will also continue to conduct a statewide program of educational assessment. This program will measure progress toward achieving the full range of statewide goals and desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ Pupils will be assessed for progress toward proficiency and mastery as well as for minimum competency. The emphasis will be on individual progress toward fixed standards of performance, not on comparative ranking of performance among those in the same age or grade.
- ❑ High school graduation will be contingent upon satisfactory completion of a secondary-school assessment, as well as upon the number of courses completed. This assessment will be, not a one-shot final examination, but a series of measures taken over time until satisfactorily completed. The standards will be high, but the expectation will be that all will succeed. The purpose of the assessment will be to assure that students have acquired the requisite skill and knowledge, not to rank their accomplishments against those of their peers.
- ❑ State Assessment measures will be used to promote progress as well as to foster accountability. They will be so constructed as to be useful to teachers, counselors, students, parents, and community members as well as administrators and policymakers.
- ❑ The existing State testing program, except for Regents examinations, will be revised. Assessments will not be limited to multiple-choice, standardized tests, but will include components such as the following:
  - ◆ Examinations which measure problem-solving skills and the ability to analyze and synthesize, as well as factual recall.
  - ◆ A portfolio of the pupil's best work, certified by his/her teachers and evaluated by qualified raters.
  - ◆ A professional evaluation of the pupil's accomplishments, made by his/her teachers. This evaluation should extend not only to basic skills and knowledge, but also to desirable qualities (such as persistence, creativity, and sensitivity to others) not easily measured by conventional means.
- ❑ The revised State testing program will intrude as little as possible upon the time available for instruction. Where feasible, sampling techniques will be used. State assessments will be consolidated at grades 4, 8, and 12. Local assessments of programs will be made as appropriate throughout the grades.
- ❑ School and school-district achievement will be reported through annual Comprehensive Assessment Reports (as in the Regents Action Plan and the Excellence and Accountability Program) and through periodic School Improvement Reviews, as well as through annual statewide "Chapter 655" reports. Individual pupils'

achievement will be reported fully to parents, beginning in the early years of schooling.

- ❑ The Regents will seek to promote fiscal accountability by assessing the educational results and cost-effectiveness of expenditures, both by the State as a whole and by local school districts.

5. ***Provide rewards for success and remedies for failure.***

- ❑ The Regents will seek to reward students, staff members, schools, and school districts for success. Rewards can take the form of public recognition, relaxed regulation, financial incentives, or other support.

- ❑ The Regents will promote the evaluation of teachers and administrators, in part, on the performance of their students. Successful teachers and administrators should be rewarded. Unsuccessful teachers and administrators should be given help or, in extreme cases, reassigned or removed.

- ❑ In schools with poor and declining performance, the State Education Department will require focused school improvement planning and provide technical assistance to local practitioners in making the needed improvements. Such efforts by the State will be concentrated and sustained. In conducting Registration Reviews (as set forth in the Regents Excellence and Accountability Program), the Commissioner should be empowered to supersede local authority in order to secure the educational rights of pupils by means of corrective action, including:
  - ◆ the appointment of a special deputy to direct and supervise corrective action at the school;
  - ◆ the imposition of a State-required corrective action plan, including reasonable reallocation of local resources;
  - ◆ the temporary closure of a school for reorganization;
  - ◆ with parental concurrence, the reassignment of students to other public schools.

  The Regents will seek whatever statutory authority may be needed to apply these remedies.

G. The Student

Children of primary-school age are insatiably curious, adaptive, and eager to learn. Consider what children have learned before they enter school. They are born with an instinct to suck, an instinct to grasp, a drive to live and learn. Within four or five years, usually without benefit of schooling, they have mastered some of the most important and difficult lessons of their lifetime. They know the difference between self and others, between family and strangers. They grasp the connection between cause and effect. They have a developing sense of time — of past, present, and future. They understand and can express spatial relations — up from down, in from out, front from back. They can use the grammar of their language, and they have a burgeoning vocabulary. These are tremendous achievements, and the drive to continue building on them carries on into the early school years.

As children grow and develop through puberty into adolescence, they become more preoccupied with their individuality and their connections to peer groups, and may be less inclined to give automatic deference to those who try to teach them. But the fundamental human drive to understand and master one's environment remains. The job of the school is to nurture this drive, to channel it constructively, and to help the student remain an active and increasingly responsible participant in his or her own learning.

The New Compact for Learning must begin and end with students themselves — students who are curious, questioning, restless, thoughtful, eager to use mind, imagination, and body to investigate something new, ready to do the hard work involved, willing to accept the occasional tedium, increasingly self-directed and self-disciplined. Without such purposeful and responsible activity on the part of students, useful learning will not occur. The "service delivery" model of education, which conjures up adults handing packages of "education" to groups of passive students, may be a useful metaphor for administrators engaged in allocating resources, but it is not a metaphor for learning. Without the active engagement of the child, there is no learning. Without the active participation of students, there is no Compact.

H. The Parent

In most situations, parents are the child's first and most enduringly influential teachers. If children are to succeed in school, home and school must work together. When the school reflects the values of the home and the home supports the efforts of the school, children grow in an atmosphere of shared purpose and consistent expectations.

For these reasons parents should remain active participants in their children's education throughout their school years. In many places there are barriers to such participation. Schools, as they have traditionally operated, have defined only limited and ancillary roles for parents. Schools can be forbidding institutions, and many parents do not see how they can work with administrators and teachers on their children's behalf. If parents are truly to be partners in their children's education, schools must reach out to involve them; and parents need to take part in programs that enable them to participate in educational decision making.

As partners in education, parents have certain rights and responsibilities.

Rights

- ❑ to know what is expected of the child with respect to the educational program, attendance, behavior, and deportment.
- ❑ to know what the child is being taught, and how the child is being taught.
- ❑ to know what progress the child is making, on a timely basis.
- ❑ to be informed if the child experiences academic, health, or social difficulty.
- ❑ to see the child's school records.
- ❑ to visit the child's school and to talk to the child's teachers and principal.
- ❑ to be encouraged and assisted to participate effectively in educational decision making.
- ❑ to be consulted on important matters concerning the child's education.
- ❑ to be treated with courtesy and respect by school personnel.

Responsibilities

- ❑ to send the child to school rested, clean, fed, and ready to learn.
- ❑ to ensure that the child attends school regularly.
- ❑ to be aware of the child's work, progress, and problems — by talking to the child about school, by looking at the child's work and progress reports, and by attending school functions when possible.
- ❑ to maintain continuing contact with the child's teachers and principal about the progress of the child's education.
- ❑ to reinforce at home the importance of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and values needed to function effectively in society.
- ❑ to volunteer time, skill, or resources when needed and possible.
- ❑ to take part in school and community programs that empower parents to participate in making educational decisions.
- ❑ to respond to communications from the child's school.
- ❑ to hold the child responsible for the work, attendance, behavior, and deportment expected for the child's education.
- ❑ to model in one's own life the behavior one wishes to see in one's children.
- ❑ to treat school personnel with courtesy and respect.

I. The Teacher

In schools as we know them, the quality of children's education depends upon the effectiveness of their teachers. No Compact for Learning can succeed without the active participation of well-prepared, well-supported, well-motivated teachers.

No one style of teacher or teaching is best for all students and all subjects. However, to be effective all teachers must enjoy the following conditions:

- ❑ a work load and schedule conducive to attainment of the desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ access to appropriate materials of instruction — textbooks, other publications, computer hardware and software, laboratory equipment, primary materials such as specimens, artifacts, and documents.
- ❑ access to the support services which students may need, such as those provided by counselors, psychologists, and nurses.
- ❑ a clean, safe, orderly physical environment.
- ❑ the support and respect of administrators, parents, and the community.
- ❑ opportunities for professional growth and development.
- ❑ sufficient authority to discharge their responsibilities effectively.
- ❑ the rights and obligations of a licensed profession, including participation in licensing and disciplinary proceedings.

The teachers, in turn, must be respectful of students and their parents and willing to expend the effort needed to achieve the desired learning results. In our sophisticated scheme, teachers must be accountable to their employers, students, parents, colleagues, and the standards of the profession. Among the responsibilities of teachers are:

- ❑ to participate in making decisions about the educational program in the classroom and the school, including such matters as curriculum and materials, methods of instruction, student grouping and scheduling, budgeting, and staffing.
- ❑ to remain competent and current in the subjects they teach and in instructional methods and strategies.
- ❑ to expect all students to master the desired learning outcomes, focusing on achievement rather than on students' perceived ability.
- ❑ to vary the materials, methods, and pace of instruction to ensure that all students master the desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ to create a supportive learning climate in which all students can be successful, including students from minority cultures, students of both sexes, students from homes where English is not spoken, students with handicapping conditions, and gifted and talented students.
- ❑ to maintain good communication with parents concerning their child's progress.

- ❑ to establish connections with other participants in the Compact, such as college faculty and contacts in business, government, social-service and other agencies, community organizations, and cultural institutions, for purposes of collaborative educational endeavor.

- ❑ to model for children reasoned approaches to problem-solving, the creation of an orderly work environment, and courteous, respectful treatment of others.

J. The Pupil Support Team

Pupil services are essential to every child's education. Counselors, school psychologists, social workers, attendance teachers, nurses and nurse practitioners, nurse teachers, and school physicians have traditionally worked to link the school and the community, visiting the home; contacting community agencies; and coordinating individual counseling, medical treatment, law enforcement, and other services beyond the resources of the school. These staff members can provide leadership in arranging many avenues for the closer collaboration required under the New Compact.

Children are best able to concentrate, to absorb and retain information, to think creatively, and to solve problems when they are prepared for learning and comfortable in their learning situations. To promote such an environment, the pupil support team can help to:

- ❑ integrate pupil support activities more fully into school organization and operation, in order to meet students' individual needs.

- ❑ collaborate with the community to develop comprehensive programs that meet the combined needs of students and families — for example, working with agencies such as social services, with religious institutions, and with civic organizations to help children and their families access and make effective use of existing resources within the community.

- ❑ involve parents in their children's education and link the home, school, and community in order to help reduce any cultural distance between the family and the school.

- ❑ arrange school-to-college and school-to-work experiences for students, including college study or work apprenticeships. Such experiences must become part of each child's overall educational program.

Formal instruction and pupil services, important as they are, constitute only part of children's educational experience. In the course of a school day, young people encounter many adults who listen to their cares, attend to their needs, and model mature attitudes and behavior. Food service workers, school bus drivers, office workers, members of the custodial staff, and others who work in the schools also contribute to the total environment for students. These participants in the New Compact should be involved in creating and implementing new forms of school operation. Their performance of their duties and their interactions with students provide valuable lessons in the transition from school to work.

K. The Principal

Strong leadership is vital to an effective school. The principal sets the tone; by encouraging teamwork and collaboration, by welcoming participation of parents and community members in the life of the school, by monitoring the performance of teachers and other members of the school staff, and above all, by expecting steady progress and high achievement of all pupils, the principal plays a key role in the New Compact for Learning. In many schools other administrators and supervisors also have important parts to play; their contributions to the total team effort are needed for success.

Although there is no one formula for creating effective leaders, principals in the next decade will need the willingness and capacity to find better ways of organizing teaching and learning, and to implement them effectively and collaboratively. In order to do so, principals must enjoy the following conditions:

- ❑ clearly defined authority to discharge their responsibilities and to engage staff, parents, and students in making and implementing decisions.

- ❑ flexibility in organizing the school and determining how resources will be used in the pursuit of excellence.

- ❑ access to adequate resources for the provision of appropriate instructional materials, teachers, and support services, and for the maintenance of a clean, safe, orderly physical environment.

- ❑ the support and respect of the superintendent, teachers and other staff members, parents, and the community.

- ❑ opportunities for professional growth and development.

The principal, in turn, must be respectful of teachers, students, and parents and willing to expend the effort needed to manage an effective school and achieve the desired results. Principals must be accountable to the superintendent, teachers, students, parents, the community, and the standards of the profession. Among the responsibilities of the principal are:

- ❑ to establish high expectations for staff and student performance.

- ❑ to remain abreast of research in education and to attain an extensive knowledge of instruction.
- ❑ to be actively involved in all aspects of the life of the school.
- ❑ to maintain a clean, safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment in which all students can be successful.
- ❑ to work well with the school's staff, students, parents, and the community.
- ❑ to engage teachers, staff, and parents in making decisions about the educational program, including such matters as curriculum and materials, instructional methods, student grouping and scheduling, budgeting, staffing, health and safety.
- ❑ to establish and maintain ongoing cooperation and collaboration between the home and the school.
- ❑ to take the initiative in establishing a consensus on the mission, goals, and beliefs that direct the school's educational program, and to model and articulate them to all members of the school community.
- ❑ to coordinate activity with other participants in the Compact, such as college faculty and contacts in business, government, social-service and other agencies, community organizations, and cultural institutions, for purposes of collaborative educational endeavor.
- ❑ to provide opportunities for risk-taking in the pursuit of excellence.
- ❑ to establish a system of rewards and recognition among teachers, staff, students, and parents.
- ❑ to monitor and evaluate the school's total program and engage the staff in making appropriate changes toward improving student achievement.

L. The School

In our educational system, the primary operating unit is the individual school. This complex of children and adults, of bricks and mortar, of routines and activities has a distinctive culture of its own — ways of doing things, interpersonal relationships, attitudes toward learning, children, parents, teachers, and others. The school is not only a place of instruction; it is a custodial care-giver, an arena in which values are exchanged and acquired, an accrediting agent. It is the place where young people spend most of their waking hours for at least one day of every two in the calendar year, and perhaps the single social institution most likely to affect the development of most children.

For all these and other reasons, individual schools should be as autonomous as feasible within a context of shared purpose and support. As many operating decisions as feasible must be made by the principal, the teachers, the other staff members, and the parents whom the school unit comprises. These people should of course be open to ideas and help from others, but they must within reasonable limits enjoy the freedom and authority to do things in ways which make sense to them. "Site-based decision making" is not just a contemporary fad; it is a sound and enduring principle of institutional effectiveness.

It follows that the school must be the primary unit of accountability. Of course we will assess the educational progress of individual students and the effectiveness of their individual teachers and others in helping students acquire the desired learning outcomes. But we will also assess the effect of the school as a total institution on the groups of students whom it seeks to educate.

For these reasons the Regents will continue to require the public reporting of pupil achievement and other relevant data by individual schools as well as by school systems.

M. The School District

In our system of public elementary and secondary schools, the chief responsibility for seeing that students learn is entrusted to local schools and school districts. The State can establish goals and direction; provide resources, incentives, and assistance; and monitor progress and assess results. But it cannot teach students. Teaching students is a local responsibility — local even within school districts, in the sense that learning ultimately depends more on what happens in classrooms than in boardrooms. The New Compact for Learning will succeed only to the extent that local efforts become more effective.

It is for this reason that the Compact seeks to enlarge the authority and discretion of local practitioners, within a consistent framework of State goals and assessment. Teachers, administrators and supervisors, boards of education — all must have the freedom and authority they need in order to do their jobs well. If established practices are producing the desired results, practitioners should be free to maintain them. But if they are not, practitioners, making decisions commensurate with their scope of responsibility, should be free to change them.

At the local level, this is the essence of the New Compact for Learning: that schools and school districts exercise initiative to make what changes may be needed to bring about the learning results we all desire. In a new relationship between the State and localities, the State defines more precisely *what* is to be learned, and local teachers, administrators, and boards of education have more freedom to decide *how* such learning is to occur. The State spells out goals and desired learning outcomes, provides resources, incentives and support, assesses progress, rewards success,

and remedies failure. Boards of education, teachers, administrators, and parents have more to say about school organization and operation, instructional practice, pupil grouping and scheduling, staffing patterns, the use of time, and similar matters. The Compact is designed to increase initiative and responsibility at every level of the system.

Under the New Compact for Learning, local school districts will perform the following chief functions in improving elementary, middle, and secondary education:

1. Set local objectives and performance standards.

- ❑ Within the context of Goals and desired learning outcomes established by the Regents, schools and school districts will set local objectives and develop standards of excellence by which to measure progress.
- ❑ Schools and school districts will develop long-range education plans for meeting these objectives and standards of excellence.
- ❑ Schools and school districts will develop or adapt curricula which are consistent with Regents Goals and desired learning outcomes and which meet local needs.

2. Provide resources, incentives, and assistance.

- ❑ Boards of education should provide the resources necessary to allow all pupils to achieve State goals and desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ Schools and school districts will:
  - ◆ develop and provide incentives which stimulate initiative and reward improved results.
  - ◆ focus their energies on providing assistance to teachers and other staff members who work directly with pupils, to the end of improving learning results.
  - ◆ work cooperatively with parents, to involve them more fully in the education of their children.

3. Exercise initiative to develop and conduct educational programs which produce better results.

Schools and school districts are to use the new freedom created by the Compact to develop and conduct educational programs which produce better results. There is no single recipe for achieving better results, but some ingredients and combinations are more promising than others. Among other approaches, schools and school districts should:

- ❑ provide appropriate developmental experiences for children in the first years of life.
- ❑ develop and maintain connections with families (through frequent communication, involvement of parents in decisions about the school program, training in parenting, and the like).
- ❑ develop and maintain connections with the community (through collaboration with social-service and health agencies, community-based organizations, libraries and other cultural institutions, representatives of law enforcement, and business/industry).
- ❑ provide instructional programs which help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and values needed for success in college and/or work.
- ❑ provide instructional programs which offer students a broad and balanced experience in languages and literature, the natural and social sciences, mathematics and technology, health and family studies, and the arts.
- ❑ create new forms of school organization and operation to achieve statewide goals in a more effective (and cost-effective) manner. Traditional schedules, pupil/teacher groupings, staffing patterns, instructional methods, and so on must not be seen as etched in stone.
- ❑ develop instructional programs which treat each child both as an individual and as a member of a learning team (through individualized educational programs for each child coupled with cooperative learning situations). Where necessary, the size of the school unit should be made smaller to permit this kind of sustained individual attention.
- ❑ increase the amount of pupils' quality instructional time (through better use of existing time, an extended school day, full-day kindergarten, summer programs, and/or a longer school year).
- ❑ make effective use of the new learning technologies, such as computers and interactive communications systems.
- ❑ provide constructive linkages between school/college and school/work, including college study or work apprenticeships for some who have not yet graduated from high school.
- ❑ develop partnerships with community educational resources such as libraries, museums, and educational television.
- ❑ promote individual and group responsibility among all parties (pupils, parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, State officials) for their own actions or inactions and for those of the group(s) to which they belong.
- ❑ participate in the State's new assessment program, and conduct local instructionally appropriate assessments to inform practice and promote accountability.
- ❑ report assessment results to the public in clear, simple, informative terms.

N. The Community

While schools are central to our efforts to improve educational results for all children, they cannot achieve this goal

alone. When children enter school, they bring all of their personal and community environment; we cannot separate the way a child lives from the way a child learns. If we want children to learn and develop well, the entire community — parents, institutions of higher learning, other educational and cultural institutions, religious institutions, business, law enforcement agencies, volunteer and civic organizations, social service and health agencies — must be engaged in a partnership with the school. "It takes the whole village to raise a child": it takes a living, growing network of mutual support for the child's whole development — educational, personal, social.

Any effort to improve educational results must begin with the needs of children. In many communities, schools are called upon to assist families and the community in feeding children, in providing for their health and their mental well-being, in taking care of them after school, in providing information about sex and alcohol and drugs. Under these circumstances, it is not enough that children go to a school because they live near it. The school itself must be a cohesive community that agrees on its own needs and goals; and both the school and the larger community must cooperate to motivate children to learn, to support children in their learning, to instill work habits, and to reward achievement.

Improving educational outcomes through a collaboration between the school and the community requires that:

- ❑ community members, organizations, and agencies work with one another and with the schools to create and maintain a safe, wholesome environment for children.
- ❑ the community as a whole show respect for children's achievement in school.
- ❑ all participants work together to create a sense of neighborhood and community in which each member, including every child, is known and respected.
- ❑ members of the community convey their expectation that children will behave appropriately and responsibly.
- ❑ members of the community help children to gain maturity and responsibility by affording them opportunities for service.
- ❑ all participants in children's education, whether in the school, in the community, or in governmental agencies, accept and discharge their responsibilities in providing services to children and in developing goals and desired outcomes for education.
- ❑ all participants commit themselves to maintain communication and collaboration between the school and the community.
- ❑ all participants seek to share resources in the most effective way to foster the development of all the children in the community and to achieve desired educational results.
- ❑ all participants work together to assess and reorganize educational programs in order to improve effectiveness and meet emerging needs.

O. The Superintendent of Schools

Just as the principal sets the tone for a school building, the superintendent must coordinate the creation of a shared vision for the school district. The superintendent, with the Board of Education, provides the symbolic and practical leadership needed to assure the establishment of the means necessary to achieve the desired outcomes of learning. In order to do so, the superintendent must enjoy the following conditions:

- ❑ a climate supportive of education, its impact and place in the community.
- ❑ the support and confidence of the Board of Education.
- ❑ the support and respect of the community at large, and of the administrators, teachers, and other school employees.
- ❑ clearly articulated expectations and authority to move the district toward the desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ opportunities for continued professional growth and development.

The superintendent, in turn, must solicit opinion and nurture participation in order to engage the full community in the vision of the schools and the future of the children. The opinions of parents, teachers and other members of the school staff, administrators, and others must be actively sought and respectfully considered in decisions related to educational planning and operation.

Among the responsibilities of the superintendent are:

- ❑ to establish, with the Board of Education, faculty, parents, and students, a positive climate in which attention and energies can be focused on education and the needs of children.
- ❑ to provide for the Board of Education, school personnel, and the public an assessment of the district's needs, both in educational and in general terms.
- ❑ to establish the means by which the school and the community in general can be involved in developing and sharing a vision and goals for the district.
- ❑ to provide a process by which these goals or priorities can be affirmed and the means to attain them established.
- ❑ to work to ensure that expectations are accompanied by the resources needed to achieve them.
- ❑ to assure that outcomes assessments are conducted periodically.

- ❑ to provide sustained support for the attainment of educational goals and for the efforts of staff.
- ❑ to provide leadership in support of the district's goals:
  - ◆ within the agenda of the Board of Education
  - ◆ in individual school buildings and in classrooms
  - ◆ at public meetings
  - ◆ in the media
  - ◆ to the public at large.

P. The Board of Education

School boards express the democratic ideal of enabling ordinary people to decide what is best for themselves and their children. Lay control of public schools through school boards represents more than a venerable 200-year-old tradition. As a practical matter, boards reflect and guide the will of the community, transforming it into policies, programs, and services for the young. If there were no school boards, it has often been said, communities inevitably would invent something like them.

School boards have an array of legal responsibilities: from establishing rules for student order and discipline to prescribing courses of study and textbooks to be used; from purchasing school sites and hiring qualified teachers to raising the funds to pay them. In sum, the law charges boards with having "in all respects the superintendence, management, and control" of educational affairs at the district level.

Boards do not actually do all of these things themselves. Many of their responsibilities are delegated to administrators or shared with teachers, parents, and others in the education community. Nevertheless, because the law defines their authority so broadly, boards ultimately are held accountable for the outcomes produced by decisions they share. In turn, when others participate in decisions about educating children, they should share with school boards in the accountability.

So school boards — not individual board members, but boards as corporate entities — validate educational decisions with their legal authority as well as their responsiveness to the community's will. But they do not administer; they govern. They exert their leadership by formulating policy and evaluating performance. Thereby they guide the core purposes and shape the values of the institutions they serve. Through policy, school boards define school district mission and performance standards.

School boards function most effectively when the following conditions prevail:

- ❑ They adhere to their policy-making role, delegating the administration of the schools and holding accountable those to whom they delegate responsibility.
- ❑ They provide the resources necessary to allow all pupils to achieve State goals and desired learning outcomes.
- ❑ They develop opportunities for everyone — staff, students, parents, and community organizations included — to participate in the educational enterprise meaningfully and purposefully. Participation must be constantly guided by the question: In what specific ways will this improve learning for children?
- ❑ They lead by using their personal knowledge of the needs of local students and the community to determine what schools should and should not attempt to do, taking into account the information gained through community participation in school and district planning. As a microcosm of the community, boards must be able to exercise common sense and collective wisdom, interpreting reforms in practical terms — money, time, space, and people.
- ❑ They are proactive in hiring a superintendent, assertive in defining the superintendent's job, and straightforward in evaluating him or her.
- ❑ They appraise their own performance periodically and honestly.

As the community members charged with responsibility for overseeing the operation of local public school systems, school boards play a pivotal role in the New Compact for Learning. It is up to them to create the conditions which will enable the other participants to fulfill the principles of the Compact.

Q. The Region

In our large and diverse State, many purposes, both public and private, are best served through concerted action by region, as well as (or rather than) by individual communities. Economic development, transportation, radio and television broadcasting, social and other services are such purposes. So is education. In order to improve educational results, existing regional efforts in education need to be supported; new ones need to be encouraged; collaboration with regional efforts for other purposes needs to be increased. A few of the possibilities are described here; there are many others, all of which should become part of the New Compact as it grows and changes in the hands of participants.

For decades, school districts outside the State's five largest cities have benefited from the regional coordination provided by Boards of Cooperative Educational Services. Through the BOCES, districts purchase centrally programs and services that would be uneconomical for them to provide directly: occupational education from automobile repair to welding, special education, computer support and networking, management support such as cooperative

food bidding and records management, instructional support, staff development. Many of these services are provided in the schools; others, at a central location. BOCES cooperate with colleges and universities to make college-level courses available at BOCES facilities and to foster articulation from high school to college. They are governed by elected boards of community representatives, and led by District Superintendents who are also vital communication links between the Regents/ State Education Department and local school districts. This valuable collaborative engine should be strengthened. For example:

- The Regents will seek greater flexibility in statutes governing school-district organization, providing greater freedom for District Superintendents and local school districts to make arrangements that are suited to regional circumstances.
- School districts are encouraged to explore the prospects for arranging further cooperative services through BOCES (for example, academic or honors courses that smaller districts cannot otherwise afford).
- The State and the five largest cities should cooperatively explore whether central arrangements similar to BOCES would enhance the educational opportunities available to children in the cities. If so, the law should be amended to permit such arrangements.

Schools and school districts cooperate through BOCES with one another and, to some extent, with colleges and universities. They have many other connections with institutions and groups in their communities and regions: Red Cross blood drives, community projects of student organizations, library exchanges. Such interconnections must be vastly multiplied and strengthened if we are, together, to achieve the educational results we need. The State has initiated a program of Community Schools that points the way; Community Schools remain open longer in the day, week, and year, as sites for social-service and health programs, child care, basic and continuing education for adults, employment information for family members. Relatively well-off communities and poor communities are commonly neighbors; sharing services regionally can benefit both.

In every region of the State, schools and school districts, social-service agencies and organizations, health-care organizations, and community-service groups should join to plan collaborative programs for the mutual benefit of their overlapping clienteles. Such efforts have already begun — for instance, with exploration of joint child-care/ prekindergarten programs by school districts, local social-service agencies, and the State Departments of Education and Social Services, and with State/ regional cooperative programs to locate homeless children and enroll them in school. Schools, school districts, agencies and organizations of all sorts must be seeking many other avenues of collaboration for the benefit of children.

Public radio and television operate regionally to bring a variety of information and entertainment to the people at large, including those in the schools. These media are attractive and familiar to children; there is plentiful evidence that they learn from using radio and television. Video resources are available and abundant to support the school curriculum and ancillary learning; but lack of information or resources often prevents their fullest use. Collaborative efforts are needed among the State, public radio and television stations, and school districts:

- to assure easy and equitable access to radio and video technology by all members of New York State's diverse learning community.
- to train and inform educators about the use of video and media technologies and to assist them in using these technologies.
- to establish a network through which information about radio and video resources can be shared.
- to develop a system for correlating curriculum with available media resources.

Economic-development organizations operate in each region of New York State, networking and sharing ideas internally and mutually. In most of these organizations, private business and industry join forces with governmental economic-development agencies, financial institutions, public utilities, and educational organizations. Economic-development associations provide public information that is useful in existing and prospective economic activity; provide or broker funding for development and expansion; and provide forums for the exchange of information and ideas among members. Links between such organizations and the schools already exist, in many areas; they should be promoted.

R. Higher and Continuing Education

Higher education and continuing education have a central role in achieving the desired outcomes of the Compact. Mutual interchange between colleges and schools can benefit students at all levels: schools can draw upon research and expertise from colleges and universities in order to promote change, enrich curricula, revise assessments of student achievement, and improve organization, administration, and teaching; and higher education (particularly teacher-preparation programs) can gain from the pedagogical skills, knowledge, and insights of practitioners from the schools. Continuing education — offered by colleges, community-based organizations, social-services and other agencies,

libraries and other cultural institutions, school districts, proprietary trade schools, and other providers — constitutes a varied network which can work closely with schools to meet the needs of dropouts, the unemployed and underemployed, and lifelong learners from all walks of life.

We have a strong base on which to build greater interconnection. For example, all over the State teachers, administrators, and college faculty meet in seminars to discuss topics ranging from health issues in the schools to student learning and behavior. Many colleges work directly with middle-level and high-school students, encouraging them to stay in school and assisting them to learn. A variety of basic and higher-level skills courses is available in nearly every community, ready to be marshaled more systematically on behalf of the young and adults in general.

Higher Education

Closer collaboration between the schools and institutions of higher education will be essential to reconceive New York's system of education as outlined in this document. New York's higher-education institutions, public and independent, can contribute by conducting and disseminating relevant research, by expanding their collaboration with other partners in the Compact, and, in some instances, by reviewing or revising their own practices with regard to the Compact's principles. For example, colleges and universities and their members can:

- ❑ develop preservice and in-service education and professional preparation programs for a new generation of elementary, middle, and secondary teachers and administrators committed to achieving better results — programs which include such features as the following:
  - ◆ a focus on the results of teacher education itself, rather than on process (e.g., number of credit hours completed): for example, preparation of teachers who know, and are ready to continue learning, subject-matter expertise; a variety of instructional strategies, suited to varying needs of learners; information about the cultures represented in the population of New York State; and the design and purposes of various means of assessing student achievement;
  - ◆ greater involvement of practicing teachers and administrators in teacher-preparation programs as curriculum developers, as researchers, as guest presenters, as advisors, or in other roles;
  - ◆ preparation of teachers who can create a supportive learning climate in which all students can be successful, including students from minority cultures, students of both sexes, students from homes where English is not spoken, students with handicapping conditions, and gifted and talented students;
  - ◆ strategies for developing partnerships with outside agencies and the community;
  - ◆ methods of teaching with primary materials, such as historical records, rocks, fossils, and botanical and animal specimens.
- ❑ collaborate in specifying the skills, knowledge, and understanding which students in elementary, middle, and secondary schools need to acquire and in developing measures for assessing that acquisition.
- ❑ conduct research and disseminate the results, in forms useful to other researchers, practitioners, and the public, on topics such as the following:
  - ◆ means of promoting participation by teachers, other members of the school staff, and parents in educational planning, decision making, and staff assessment;
  - ◆ modes of assessing student progress in a variety of ways, as outlined elsewhere in this document, and of determining the validity, practicality, and appropriate uses of each;
  - ◆ educationally effective ways of organizing schools, space, time, effort, and materials.
- ❑ organize collaborative work and study among members of college faculty and their elementary and secondary teaching colleagues to examine pedagogical issues and methods, conduct research designed to illuminate or improve teaching in colleges and schools, and develop joint programs of interest for themselves and their students. Such programs might include, for example, teacher/ faculty exchange programs for the mutual benefit of participants and their institutions.
- ❑ collaborate in preparing a corps of teachers and supervisors to conduct School Improvement Reviews.
- ❑ collaborate in the development of educational networks which provide access to all areas of the State through electronic and other means of communication, linking students, teachers/ faculty, administrators, other school/ college staff members, and staff members at libraries, museums, and other cultural and educational institutions.
- ❑ collaborate with schools to motivate and prepare elementary, middle, and secondary students for higher education:
  - ◆ continue and expand collaborative programs, involving colleges, schools, parents, business, industry, and community organizations, to assist youth-at-risk in completing secondary school and entering college;
  - ◆ support exchange programs in which students, faculty, and staff from one level volunteer to assist in or enrich curricular and extracurricular activities for students from the other;

- explore the implications for college admission and placement of State and local assessment programs which certify students' performance at specified levels of proficiency. Define institutional (or system-wide) standards for preparation to begin college-level study, and communicate these standards to students, parents, schools, and the public;
- provide feedback in convenient ways to school districts on their graduates' academic performance in college.

Continuing Education

New York has a rich variety of continuing-education programs, with offerings of interest to every segment of the adult population: formal and informal courses and programs on reading, writing, and appreciating literature in English and other languages; using computers; calculating and mathematical problem-solving; working in teams; managing organizations; cooking; repairing machinery; and countless other topics. However, this vast network is relatively uncoordinated. It is up to the individual, with whatever guidance he or she can find, to discover how to participate.

In the spirit of the New Compact, the schools and the various providers of continuing education must exchange information about programs and their availability. In particular:

- ❑ Schools should not relinquish responsibility for young people who drop out before graduating. They should maintain records on such former students, attempt to make contact with them periodically, inform them about programs in the schools, and put them in touch with providers of continuing education that might be suited to their needs.
- ❑ Particularly in disadvantaged communities, schools should be the sites for a variety of community programs and services, available on extended days and extended hours of each day for students, former students, and their families. They should collaborate for this purpose with social-service agencies, local governments, economic-development organizations, business and industry, cultural institutions, and community-based organizations of all sorts. Some of this activity will be self-supporting, through student fees; other support for this coordinated effort might come from a variety of sources — the business community, charitable funds such as the United Way, school districts, the State, Federal, and local governments, others.

S. Libraries and Other Cultural Institutions

In our State and its communities, thousands of institutions of cultural education constitute a vital network of resources which complement the schools. Museums, libraries, public broadcasting stations, archives, local government records repositories, art centers, historical sites and societies, zoos, and botanical gardens offer vast possibilities for experiential, interactive learning. By using these resources, students gain a sense of their past, customs, cultural and moral values, and the richness and diversity of the human experience. They learn to fix themselves in the stream of time, to understand and cope with change, and to live and learn in an increasingly complex world. The variety and flexibility of settings and materials available through cultural institutions are suited to all learning styles and rates of development. The habit of using the resources of such institutions, formed through close collaboration in the school years, provides a basis for lifelong learning. These institutions play an integral part in the New Compact.

Through teaching collections, works of art, documents, and artifacts, museums of all types offer indispensable opportunities for hands-on learning and discovery. The historical documents housed in archives, local records repositories, and libraries can help students reconstruct and understand history, develop reading and analytical skills needed to comprehend and interpret primary sources, draw conclusions from evidence, and gain insights into the past. Libraries offer opportunities for students to learn essential information-retrieval, information-processing, and communication skills, as well as to read and use items from library collections. The role of community cultural and arts institutions in the New Compact includes:

- ❑ collaborating in specifying the skills, knowledge, and understanding which students need to acquire as a result of elementary, middle, and secondary education.
- ❑ collaborating with the schools to provide lessons that integrate cultural and artistic experiences into the curriculum:
  - by placing in schools, as resources for hands-on learning and discovery, teaching collections (skins, rocks, fossils, skeletons, art objects, artifacts, letters, diaries, maps), each with a focus, documentation, lesson plans, and teacher-education components;
  - by incorporating in the curriculum study visits to museums, historical sites, performing-arts organizations, and other cultural institutions, creating new formats such as learning spaces that can accommodate classes for activities lasting several hours to several weeks;
  - by training a corps of teachers to identify and use the resources of community educational and cultural institutions.
- ❑ supporting teacher-education and in-service programs with materials and appropriate training in topics such as

teaching with primary source material, using instructional television, using the arts for teaching basic skills, developing hands-on science and history units, and similar efforts.

- ❑ exploring, with business, the schools, and other community organizations, the possibilities for work/ study, internships, or other experiences for students and for staff exchange programs that increase mutual awareness of each partner's resources and realities.
- ❑ collaborating in the development of educational networks which provide access to all areas of the State through electronic and other means of communication, linking students, teachers/ faculty, administrators, other school/ college staff members, libraries, museums, and other cultural and educational resources.
- ❑ establishing branches of public libraries in school buildings, or in other institutions, to support educational programs. These branch libraries should work with the school library to enrich the resources available to students, teachers, staff, and community. The sites of these branch libraries should remain open after school hours and on weekends, working together with other services offered at or through the schools.
- ❑ providing alternative learning sites and after-school and weekend programs, coordinated with programs in the schools, that prepare children to learn independently and to access information effectively.
- ❑ providing materials and programs for early-childhood and parent education through libraries and educational television; continuing and expanding programs which bring children, parents, and other family members together to read and learn.
- ❑ helping children become excited about learning before they enter schools, and supporting their learning through their school years and thereafter.

T. Business, Industry, and Labor

The success of the public schools and the prosperity of business and industry are inextricably linked. The schools cannot thrive without the support of a healthy private economy. Business and industry cannot do well without an educated, motivated, self-disciplined work force. The two must be part of the New Compact for Learning.

The role of the schools has been described in the preceding pages. Business and industry can cooperate by:

- ❑ helping to specify the general and occupational skills, knowledge, and values which students should acquire.
- ❑ supporting the work and values of the school — particularly the importance of achieving the desired learning outcomes. Prospective employers should check students' academic records. Employees should be encouraged to continue learning.
- ❑ developing and conducting year-round work/ study apprenticeships to motivate and prepare students for the work force.
- ❑ providing time for employees to visit their children's schools and to serve as mentors and resource people.
- ❑ providing space for prekindergarten, day-care, and dependent-care programs for family members of employees and others.
- ❑ serving on boards of education and exercising leadership in parent organizations.
- ❑ lobbying with leaders of the education community for the changes necessary to achieve better results.
- ❑ lobbying with political and civic leaders for the resources necessary to provide a sound, basic education to all children.
- ❑ providing resources for educational programs which promise better results.

U. The Compact and Equity

Much of the Compact is devoted to the pursuit of educational excellence. We must be equally concerned with educational equity. Fortunately, we do not need to choose between the two.

Measures of educational achievement in New York State have long displayed a pattern of inequity. Where there are concentrations of children living in poverty, achievement is lower. A greater proportion of racial and ethnic minorities tend to live in poverty. (In New York State in 1989-90, one-quarter of the public schools with more than 80 percent minority enrollment also had more than 60 percent of students' families on public assistance. Among public schools where minorities constituted less than 20 percent of enrollment, less than one percent of families received public assistance.) There is a significant gap in achievement between socioeconomic haves and have-nots and between members of majority and minority groups.

In recent years, as the schools have focused on helping pupils achieve minimum competence in basic skills, this gap has begun to close somewhat — at least for the basic skills. However, as we reach beyond minimum competence for more complex skills and the pursuit of mastery, there is a danger that the gap could widen, because less affluent communities may lack the resources to enrich their curricula and conduct the necessary staff development and other support activities. There is great disparity in school districts' ability to spend on education. Districts' expenditures per pupil in New York State range from a low of approximately $3,000 to a high of more than $18,000.

School tax rates also vary widely among districts, from $3.00 to $35.00 for every $1,000 of full property value.

The Compact is designed to assure equity as well as excellence. It does so in at least these ways:

Resources

One of the principles of the Compact is "provide the means." Every child in New York State is entitled to the resources necessary to achieve State goals and desired learning outcomes. Every child is entitled to qualified teachers and counselors, up-to-date textbooks and instructional materials, contemporary learning technology, and a safe, clean learning environment.

It is not enough to provide all children with equal resources at the beginning points of learning. The New Compact is about results, not inputs. To achieve equity of results, children with greater needs require greater resources. Although adequate resources are not, in themselves, sufficient to bring about equity in educational results, they are a necessary means to that end. Obviously, some children will continue to outperform others in varying ways. (The goal is equity, not equivalence.) But to the extent possible the disparities in achievement should arise from talent and industry, not from race or social class. And *all* children should be helped to achieve at a high level which enables them to function effectively in our society.

Standards and Expectations

One reason for the present educational inequities is the lower standards and expectations we have for "disadvantaged" children. Because children tend to respond to the expectations adults have of them, achievement is depressed.

The New Compact addresses this problem by setting the same high statewide standards for all children and expecting *all* to meet them. The methods and pacing of instruction must be individually varied in order to help all children meet the same high standards. An instructional program which leads to the acquisition of the skills, knowledge, and values needed to function effectively in society is every child's entitlement.

The New Compact also proposes to augment State-assisted programs of staff development and to increase provision of course syllabi and curriculum materials. These efforts will help all school districts, particularly those which lack the resources to undertake such activities on their own.

Public Reporting

Another reason for existing inequities is that school achievement data have usually not been reported by socioeconomic or racial/ethnic group. The New Compact proposes that such public reporting be made regularly. Such disclosure may promote equity by resulting in the provision of resources where they are most needed.

V. The Compact and the Excellence and Accountability Program

The Regents Excellence and Accountability Program, familiar to many people throughout New York State, is designed to promote the achievement of standards of excellence and to improve accountability in schools and school districts. Its provisions, derived from those of the Regents Action Plan, have been a precursor to the New Compact for Learning. The Excellence and Accountability Program has five chief components:

- ❑ Annual public reporting
- ❑ School registration and registration review
- ❑ School district standards of excellence
- ❑ Long-range school education plans
- ❑ Exemplary schools, programs, and practices.

These components are consistent with the principles of the Compact. In modified form, therefore, these components will now be made an integral part of the Compact and continued in effect.

W. Enacting the Compact

This statement of the New Compact for Learning is conceptual. It sets forth in broad terms the context of relationships and responsibilities within which we seek to educate our children, particularly in the State's public elementary and secondary schools. But while this statement points the way for action, it is not itself an "action document." In order for the principles and provisions of the Compact to be given effect, a set of more specific recommendations for action is needed.

At the State level, the Commissioner and staff of the State Education Department will make recommendations to the Board of Regents for appropriate changes in policy and regulation. With the approval of the Regents, they will also propose statutory changes for consideration by the Legislature.

In schools and school districts, in colleges and universities, in libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions, in

neighborhoods and communities throughout the State, all parties to the Compact are urged to exercise initiative to bring about the changes needed to produce better learning results for all our children.

The full promise of the Compact will take many years to realize. But much of the work can begin at once — and, indeed, it has begun in many places. The need to act is urgent. We have only a few years left to prepare ourselves and our children for life in the 21st century.

X. The Compact: A Changing Plan for Changing Conditions

The New Compact is not a short-term project or a quick fix. It is not a new program to be "put in place." It is a context of re-structured relationships within which the energies of all participants in the system may find more effective scope. Unlike some past efforts at educational reform, it does not prescribe what participants must do. Rather, it sets clear goals, provides support and procedural freedom, and invites people in all parts of the system to exercise initiative in making desired improvements.

As programmatic and organizational changes are made, our understanding of effective school practice, the context of relationships, and society itself will change. For this reason, the Compact should be regarded as a growing, developing, long-term effort, one which should be subject to ongoing scrutiny and revision. The Regents and the State Education Department will regularly convene representatives of all participants in the system to review and revise the aims, principles, and specific provisions of the Compact and the documents which reflect it.

Y. The Regents Goals for Elementary- and Secondary-School Students, 1984

The Regents Statement of Goals for students includes skills and characteristics which each student should acquire through education. Responsibility for education is shared by the family, schools, and other organizations in each community. The Regents goals can be realized only through a concerted effort by all of these. The *Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York* focuses on the actions schools can and must take to help students meet these goals.

Our Action Plan is directed toward what children in New York should be, should know, and should be able to do. Our expectations and standards set for them reflect an anticipation of the knowledge, skill, and capacity they must have to meet ever more rigorous challenges for employment and economic competition; for carrying their obligations in the governance of our democratic republic; for meeting their responsibilities to family, self and community; and for the perpetuation of culture and civilization in New York.

The goals, expectations, and aspirations to be realized through the schools are the same for all. However, all children are not the same. They have different talents and abilities, interests and emotions, strengths and weaknesses. For each individual we desire an educational system that will both stimulate and urge the full development of potential. We must, therefore, provide considerable choice and flexibility for each student together with basic requirements. We want each child to develop self-confidence and a belief in the success in learning. We want each to develop a capacity for continued self-learning. We want each to develop self-discipline and a sense of decency and responsibility.

In order to put those objectives for self-development in the perspective of what is necessary for the individual to contribute to and succeed in society, we have the more general standards and credentials for all. These provide the societal guideposts and an indication of what each child and that child's own school needs in preparation for taking part in a broader community.

The specific statements of goals that follow are all in terms of our expectations for students. They start with a first priority on language — the capacity to communicate which underpins all the rest of learning. These statements of goals are, in turn, translated in this Plan to courses, subjects, disciplines, and methods of inquiry for examining the world. Taken together the goals represent our judgments or choices for the meaning of a total elementary and secondary education.

1. Each student will master communication and computation skills as a foundation to:
   - 1.1 Think logically and creatively.
   - 1.2 Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems.
   - 1.3 Comprehend written, spoken, and visual presentations in various media.
   - 1.4 Speak, listen to, read, and write clearly and effectively in English.
   - 1.5 Perform basic mathematical calculations.
   - 1.6 Speak, listen to, read, and write at least one language other than English.
   - 1.7 Use current and developing technologies for academic and occupational pursuits.
   - 1.8 Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize and use that information for those purposes.

2. Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through the following disciplines and use the methods and knowledge in interdisciplinary applications:
   - 2.1 English language and literature.
   - 2.2 History and social science.
   - 2.3 Mathematics.
   - 2.4 Natural sciences and technology.
   - 2.5 Language and literature in at least one language other than English.
3. Each student will acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and intellectual accomplishments of civilization and develop the skills to express personal artistic talents. Areas include:
   - 3.1 Ways to develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts.
   - 3.2 Aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art.
   - 3.3 Ability to use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups.
   - 3.4 Ability to produce or perform works in at least one major art form.
   - 3.5 Materials, media, and history of major art forms.
   - 3.6 Understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.
4. Each student will acquire knowledge about political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in this country and other countries. Included are:
   - 4.1 Knowledge of American political, economic, and social processes and policies at national, state, and local levels.
   - 4.2 Knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in various nations; ability to compare the operation of such institutions; and understanding of the international interdependence of political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental systems.
5. Each student will respect and practice basic civic values and acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes necessary to participate in democratic self-government. Included are:
   - 5.1 Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights.
   - 5.2 Respect for self, others, and property as integral to a self-governing, democratic society.
   - 5.3 Ability to apply reasoning skills and the process of democratic government to resolve societal problems and disputes.
6. Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs, and attitudes.
7. Each student will acquire knowledge of the ecological consequences of choices in the use of the environment and natural resources.
8. Each student will develop general career skills, attitudes, and work habits and make a self-assessment of career prospects. Students not directly pursuing postsecondary education will acquire entry-level employment skills.
9. Each student will learn knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable development of:
   - 9.1 Self-esteem.
   - 9.2 The ability to maintain physical, mental, and emotional health.
   - 9.3 Understanding of the ill effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
10. Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge.

Z. The Regents Bill of Rights for Children

An Education Charter for the Decade of the Child

I. All children have the right to a healthy, secure, nurturing infancy and early childhood.

II. All children have the right to live in circumstances which permit healthy intellectual, emotional, physical, and moral development.

III. All children have the right to a free, sound, basic education.

IV. Each child has the right to an education appropriate for his or her individual needs.

V. All children have the right to an education which respects their culture, race, socioeconomic background, and the language of their home.

VI. All children have the right to schools and educational programs which are effective.

VII. All children have the right to educational programs which prepare them for jobs, for college, for responsible family life, and for citizenship in a self-governing society.

VIII. All children have the right to the resources needed to secure their educational rights.

IX. All children have the right to pursue their education without fear.

X. All children are entitled to an education which involves responsibilities as well as rights.

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